



## Chapter 5

## By Profession

Ultimately, protecting children from environment threats and meeting your legal responsibilities is a matter of personal responsibility. Each member of the staff and management at a child care facility must accept responsibility for doing his or her part. This chapter takes the requirements and recommendations described in chapters 2 and 3 and organizes them by the different professionals that work at your facility. Review chapters 2 and 3 to determine which checklist items are required by law for your facility or are recommendations. In either case, every checklist item will help protect your children and staff from environmental, health, and safety concerns.

Dividing this guidance by profession will assist you in training and delegating responsibilities. The categories of professionals may not exactly match your organization. We used them because they reflect the typical categories at a medium-sized child care facility. They illustrate the basic differences in roles and responsibilities. However, you may have one person who serves in several roles. Or you may divide the roles among different people. Use this guidance only as a starting point.

IDEM recommends that your organization considers incorporating the guidance into position descriptions and performance appraisals for staff and management.

## **5.1 ALL PERSONNEL**

Each staff member at your facility has a responsibility to protect children. The following requirements or recommendations apply to every one.

### **A. Environmental Health**

- ' Run your cold water pipes before drinking to flush out potential lead contaminants.
- ' Ensure that all equipment, surfaces, and items with which employees and children come in contact are free of lead-based paint chips or dust.
- ' Use a door mat and wipe shoes to prevent potential lead dust and other toxins from entering the facility.
- ' Maintain friable asbestos in safe condition.
- ' Do not touch asbestos that you're leaving alone.
- ' Store food properly to prevent pests.
- ' Never spray pesticides when children are present.
- ' Read labels and use products correctly.
- ' Never idle cars in garages.
- ' Never use gas ovens to heat the facility.
- ' Never use or store gasoline-powered engines inside the facility.
- ' Never smoke around children.
- ' Open flues when fireplaces are in use to prevent carbon monoxide poisoning.
- ' Use exhaust fans to prevent mold and mildew.
- ' Cleanup mercury spills properly.
- ' Recycle batteries to keep mercury out of the waste stream.

### **B. Safety**

- ' Practice good housekeeping at all times, keeping your facility free of debris.
- ' Do not use portable electric or gas heaters.
- ' Report fires and fire damage immediately.
- ' Keep all stairways, halls, corridors, exits, and aisles free from obstruction and lighted at all times.
- ' Contact your local fire department if you notice any burning smell in your lighting ballasts.
- ' Lock ammunition and firearms in areas inaccessible to children at all times.
- ' Store all pesticides and other chemicals away from children.
- ' Maintain equipment, materials, and furnishings in good, safe condition.
- ' Ensure that all chemical containers, such as cleaning solutions, are labeled properly.
- ' Know what to do in the event of a chemical-related accident.
- ' Lock and store hazardous items away from children.
- ' Safely store items to prevent trips or falls.
- ' Regulate hot water.
- ' Establish and practice Emergency Action Plans

*Refer to chapters 2 and 3 for more information on each checklist item and to determine if it is required by law or is a recommendation.*

**C. Sanitation**

- ' Practice Universal Precautions.
- ' Follow infection control practices when handling all body fluids.
- ' Wash hands BEFORE AND AFTER diapering, helping children with the toilet, preparing food, or eating, and AFTER using the restroom, wiping noses, playing outdoors, using art supplies, or handling pets or animals.

**D. Environmental Stewardship**

- ' Recycle, recycle, recycle! Materials accepted in most areas of the state include aluminum beverage or food cans, glass bottles and jars, plastic milk and water jugs, plastic drink and detergent bottles, steel food cans, newspapers, magazines, paper, and corrugated boxes.
- ' Turn off lights when you leave rooms.

## **5.2 DIRECTORS**

In most organizations, the responsibility for meeting compliance responsibilities usually lies with the director. The director may delegate or contract out the work, but the director still shares the responsibility.

The typical director of a child care facility wears many hats. The director is responsible for policy decisions, interaction with contractors or utilities, training, personnel management, and parent communications. The tasks described below reflect the broad nature of these responsibilities.

### **A. Making Policy Decisions**

As a director, you need to make some difficult decisions that may make your facility more attractive to parents and staff but can pose a hazard to children. Examples include:

- ' Remove animals with fur in rooms with children who are allergic to animal dander.
- ' Prohibit smoking anywhere on your facility's grounds.

### **B. Interaction with Regulatory Agencies, Utilities or Property Managers**

The director usually is the face of the facility when working with regulatory agencies, utilities, or the landlord. Typically, only the director has a broad enough view of the facility to ensure positive interactions. While the director may delegate specific interactions to facility staff, the director should stay involved and monitor the situation.

#### **Landlord**

- ' If you rent or lease space, contact your landlord regarding the presence of lead, asbestos, or any other environmental hazard.

#### **Utility**

- ' Contact your water utility regarding the potential presence of lead in the system.

#### **Fire Department**

- ' If you have a PCB transformer, it must be registered with fire response personnel.
- ' Maintain records of inspections, maintenance, and disposal of a PCB transformer.
- ' Receive a fire inspection annually.

#### **State and Local Agencies**

- ' Contact IDEM or your local health department immediately in the event of an asbestos release.

## C. Contract Decisions

In many cases, you will have to rely on outside contractors to manage environmental, health, and safety threats at your facility. A director makes legally binding commitments for the facility and usually is responsible for the decisions regarding the selection, management, and payment for contractors.

### Contractors to Assess Situation

- ' Have your drinking water tested for lead whether you are served by a well or public utility.
- ' Get a lead risk assessment.
- ' Test at-risk children for lead.
- ' Test your soil if your facility is located near a lead smelter.
- ' Have a licensed inspector perform an asbestos inspection, especially before renovation.
- ' Test your building for radon.
- ' Use a state-certified radon tester or mitigator if you hire a professional to perform radon testing or mitigation (reduction).

### Contractors to Address Situation

- ' Use a licensed contractor to remove lead-based paint if the intent is to remove the paint permanently.
- ' Use IDEM-licensed asbestos contractors.
- ' Ensure your contractor disposes of your asbestos properly.
- ' Contract with a licensed pest-control operator as necessary.
- ' Request that your pest-control operator uses Integrated Pest Management strategies.
- ' Use experts to fix a radon problem.
- ' Ensure contractors do not leave their equipment unattended and that they shut it off when not in use.

## D. Develop Plans

Several regulations require the facility to have a written plan of action to address situations. Usually the director has the responsibility to write and enforce these plans, which are as follows:

- ' Develop a written Emergency Action Plan.
- ' File new building or alteration plans.
- ' Develop an exposure control plan.
- ' Develop an asbestos management plan.
- ' Develop a written Hazard Communication Program.

## E. Providing or Arranging for Training

Training facility staff is one of the most critical tasks for a director. Well-trained employees make fewer mistakes and contribute to the overall healthy operation of your facility. Think of it as problem prevention. While directors may not do all the training, it is their responsibility to ensure the material is presented accurately.

### Hazard Communication

- ' Train employees on the hazards of chemicals in the workplace.
- ' Communicate the hazards of asbestos to employees.
- ' Inform employees if there is a potential exposure to any level of airborne lead.
- ' Train staff to follow Universal Precautions to prevent HIV, Hepatitis B, and Hepatitis A transmission.

- ' Document Universal Precautions training.
- ' Educate staff on pest prevention and the proper and judicious use of pesticides.

**Training Staff**

- ' Train staff on emergency and disaster evacuation procedures annually.
- ' Practice emergency and disaster evacuation procedures.
- ' Provide fire extinguisher training as part of your mandatory safety training.
- ' Conduct and document fire drills.
- ' Request an in-service training on fire hazards.
- ' Provide first aid training.
- ' Train staff on recycling opportunities and energy efficiency measures they can take at your facility.

**F. Personnel Management**

Beyond training, there are several actions that you need to take to protect children and staff.

- ' Offer the Hepatitis B vaccination to employees free of charge.
- ' Prohibit staff or other persons with communicable diseases from having contact with children.

**G. Facility Management**

The director needs to ensure the physical facility operates properly. While staff may maintain the facility, it needs to be constructed and set up properly.

- ' Comply with Indiana fire and building laws.
- ' Comply with the requirements for an "E-3" occupancy if you are opening a child care facility in an existing building (for centers and ministries).
- ' Comply with state fire code if you use portable, unvented, oil-burning heating appliances in homes (they are absolutely prohibited in centers or ministries).
- ' Follow construction, design, and safety rules for swimming or wading pools at homes.
- ' Meet the definition of a residential structure for homes.
- ' If you are connected to well, treat it regularly to reduce leaching of lead and other hazardous chemicals.

**H. General Safety**

- ' Post emergency numbers by the telephone.
- ' Designate a smoking area if you permit smoking.
- ' Install an approved fire alarm system when required.
- ' Install fire extinguishers when required.
- ' Provide required exits.
- ' Maintain a first aid kit.
- ' During renovations, repair, or cleaning activities, protect your employees and construction workers, in addition to children, from the hazards of lead-based paint.
- ' Learn more about radon health risks, testing, and mitigation.
- ' Allow pesticides to be applied only by staff trained and certified by the state if you do not hire a licensed pest control operator.
- ' Provide personal protective equipment and supplies to prevent exposure to blood or certain other body fluids.
- ' Dispose of infectious waste properly.

**I. Communicate with Families**

- ' Notify parents when a child is suspected of having a communicable disease.
- ' Educate families about the Indiana Fish Consumption Advisory and items containing mercury.
- ' Educate families on the hazards of improper pesticide use.
- ' Educate families about recycling options in your community.
- ' Educate families about the energy efficiency measures you've taken at your facility and what they can do at home.

## **5.3 TEACHERS**

Because teachers play a critical role in daily interactions with children and parents, they have important opportunities to protect and enhance the facility's environmental, health, and safety performance.

- ' Ensure children do not come into contact with lead-based paint chips.
- ' Report peeling paint to directors.
- ' Isolate children with communicable diseases.
- ' Prohibit staff or other persons with communicable diseases from having contact with children.
- ' Notify parents when a child is suspected of having a communicable disease.
- ' Sanitize or disinfect facilities or articles that have been used by a child suspected of having a communicable disease.
- ' Follow proper procedures for diapering.
- ' Disinfect diaper changing tables.
- ' Sanitize all food contact surfaces, counter tops, tables, toys, cots, and high chairs.
- ' Keep children away from soil with animal droppings to prevent histoplasmosis.
- ' Ensure food is cleaned up properly after meals and snacks.
- ' Monitor children's book bags and items from home for lice and other pests.
- ' In homes, never allow children to sleep in rooms with an unvented gas or kerosene space heater.



## 5.4 MAINTENANCE STAFF

Maintenance staff most often handle and secure hazardous materials. They must be educated on their proper and careful use and storage.

### A. Inspections

- ' Ensure all paint surfaces that contain lead-based paint are not peeling or chipping.
- ' Ensure asbestos-containing materials remain encapsulated safely (DO NOT TOUCH OR DISTURB ASBESTOS-CONTAINING MATERIALS).
- ' Store flammable liquids in tightly sealed containers and in rooms inaccessible to children.
- ' Prevent entryways for pests.
- ' Ensure your gas equipment and appliances are in good working order.
- ' Inspect all fuel-burning appliances annually.
- ' Ensure that your air-ventilation system is clean.
- ' Keep outdoor air intakes unobstructed.
- ' If you have a PCB transformer, visually inspect it quarterly for oil leaks on the ground.
- ' Ensure that proper PCB identification labels are affixed to the transformer and any access materials.

### B. Routine Maintenance

- ' Firmly secure carpets.
- ' Protect electrical outlets.
- ' Protect air-conditioning compressors.
- ' Leave lead-based paint alone before covering it.
- ' Cover lead-based paint.
- ' Discard paint chips safely.
- ' Do not use or store gasoline-powered engines inside the facility.
- ' Prevent moisture build-up to avoid mold and mildew.
- ' Eliminate water or food sources for pests.
- ' Clean humidifiers.
- ' Clean or remove water damage.
- ' Dispose of mercury waste properly.
- ' Recycle your fluorescent bulbs.

### C. Selection of Maintenance Materials

- ' Replace mercury thermostats with electronic thermostats.
- ' Replace mercury thermometers with digital thermometers or alcohol (red or blue bulb) thermometers.
- ' Use low-odor, water-based paints.

**D. Renovations or Alterations**

- ' Do not perform any alterations or renovations with children or staff present.
- ' Vent gas water heaters outside.
- ' Use lead-free pipes and materials in remodeling or new construction.
- ' Install and use an exhaust fan vented outdoors over gas stoves.

## 5.5 CLEANING STAFF

Cleaning staff also handle hazardous chemicals and have the opportunity to reduce exposures. Because they clean areas where children may be present, their performance can have a significant impact on your children.

- ' Keep your facility clean and sanitary.
- ' Do not vacuum or sweep when children are in the building (except after meals or small clean ups).
- ' Sanitize or disinfect facilities or articles that have been used by a child suspected of having a communicable disease.
- ' Sanitize kitchenware with required heat OR a 50 parts per million bleach to water solution (approximately 2 teaspoon bleach to one gallon of water-test with chlorine test strips). This solution is for dishes or other items you submerge. They must be submerged for at least 60 seconds.
- ' Sanitize the following with a 100 parts per million bleach (approximately one teaspoon bleach to one gallon of water-test with chlorine test strips) or equivalent food-service approved quantanary ammonia solution: all food contact surfaces, counter tops, tables, food preparation areas, toys, cots, high chairs, floors (you may use a stronger solution on floors only, such as a disinfectant, but it is necessary only if blood is present).
- ' Disinfect the following with a 1:9, or 10% bleach solution (approximately one cup bleach to nine cups water): diaper changing tables, floors (only if blood is present), or other items that may have contact with body fluids, e.g., urine, blood, feces.
- ' Do not use disinfectant solutions on surfaces to be sanitized. The concentration is too strong and will leave a residue that can be injurious to children.
- ' Discard paint chips safely.
- ' Dust with wet rags or mops if you have lead-based paint in your facility.
- ' Wet clean carpets annually.
- ' Run water through unused floor drains and sinks to prevent sewer gas.
- ' Keep trash covered to prevent pests.

## **5.6 KITCHEN STAFF**

Kitchen staff members have a unique responsibility to prevent the spread of health hazards through the proper preparation and clean up of meals.

- ' Prepare healthy, well-balanced meals with a variety of foods.
- ' Wash hands before cooking.
- ' Flush your cold-water pipes before drinking or cooking.
- ' Use cold water only for drinking or food preparation.
- ' Sanitize all kitchenware, including dishes, with appropriate chemicals or heat.
- ' Wash and scrub fresh fruits and vegetables with cold running water before preparing.
- ' Keep the kitchen clean and sanitary. Do not leave any food or water sources for pests.
- ' Store food items in sealable plastic containers, not cardboard.
- ' Follow the Indiana Fish Consumption Advisory to ensure proper preparation of fresh fish.
- ' Use non-mercury, food-service approved thermometers in refrigerators and freezers.